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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 STR-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00
OPIC-03 /067 W
----------041681 181931Z /15
O 181630Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9459

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 3653

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PDIP, EINV, EAID, ET, US
SUBJECT: COMPENSATION CLAIMS AND CALL ON CHAIRMAN MENGISTU

REF: (A) ADDIS ABABA 3538 (B) ADDIS ABABA 3537

1. HEAD OF AMERICAS DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN OFFICE BERHANE DERESSA, UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM FOREIGN MINISTER, CALLED EMBASSY AUGUST 18 TO REQUEST AMBASSADOR TO CALL AUGUST 19. THIS LATER CHANGED TO 5:30 P.M. AUGUST 18. AFTER OPENING WITH CHARGES OF CIA SUBVERSION OR DESTABILIZATION OF PMGSE FROM SUDAN AND ALLEGED SUPPORT TO PRESIDENT NUMEIRI'S VILLIFICATION AND PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN AND SUPPORT OF ERITREAN GUERRILAS THROUGH VISIT OF TWO U.S. WARSHIPS TO PORT SUDAN ABOUT AUGUST 10 (WHICH BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY AND OBVIOUSLY INTRODUCTORY EYEWASH TO PUT AMBASSADOR OFF GUARD), BERHANE UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM FOREIGN MINISTER TURNED TO COMPENSATION ISSUE. HE SAID FOREIGN MINISTER CONSIDERED HE HAD ANSWERED AMBASSADOR'S LETTER TO CHAIRMAN DURING MEETING AUGUST 9 AND WAS NOT FORWARDING IT TO CHAIRMAN. FOREIGN MINISTER'S POSITION WAS THAT AN AMBASSADOR COULD ONLY ADDRESS A LETTER TO THE CHAIRMAN IF IT CONTAINED A SPECIFIC MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF STATE OF HIS COUNTRY AND TO WHOM CHAIRMAN WOULD REPLY. FOREIGN MINISTER'S POSITION ON FORMAL NOTE REQUESTING
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MEETING WITH CHAIRMAN UNDER INSTRUCTIONS WAS THAT SUCH MEETING COULD ONLY BE ARRANGED BY FOREIGN MINISTER IF HE WAS CONVINCED OF IMPORTANCE OF ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED AND FULLY BRIEFED.

2. AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT HE WAS ACCREDITED TO CHAIRMAN AS PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRESIDENT AND HAD FULFILLED NORMAL INTERNATIONAL PROCEDURE, HANDING LETTER TO CHAIRMAN

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TO FOREIGN MINISTER (WHO READ IT CURSORILY AND DID NOT MAKE OBJECTIONS AT THE TIME) AND THAT REQUEST FOR MEETING HAD BEEN SENT TO PROTOCOL OFFICE OF FOREIGN MINISTRY. MANY U.S. AMBASSADORS MEET WITH CHIEFS OF STATE AROUND THE WORLD ON IMPORTANT ISSUES WITHOUT SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND CERTAINLY WITHOUT CONVEYING A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT. SUBJECTS TO BE DISCUSSED WERE FULLY COVERED IN TEXT OF LETTER TO CHAIRMAN AND WERE THE IMPORTANCE OF IMPROVING BILATERAL RELATIONS AND THE NEXUS OF ISSUES CONCERNING COMPENSATION, BILATERAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, INTERNATIONAL LOANS, AND ETHIOPIA'S GSP STATUS. TIME WAS OF THE ESSENCE AND URGENCY HAD BEEN STRESSED IN LETTER TO CHAIRMAN. THIS WAS WHY AMBASSADOR HAD TOLD FOREIGN MINISTER HE WAS TAKING EXTRAORDINARY MEASURE OF WRITING CHAIRMAN SO EARLY DURING HIS ASSIGNMENT. FOREIGN MINISTER'S COMMENTS AUGUST 9 COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED REPLY TO LETTER TO CHAIRMAN, SINCE AMONG OTHER THINGS HE HAD NOT READ IT THOROUGHLY, CERTAINLY HAD NOT CONSIDERED IT AND DID NOT ADDRESS OPERATIVE PARAGRAPH ABOUT MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVE OR REPRESEN-
TATIVES OF NAMED AMERICAN CLAIMANTS BEFORE THE END OF AUGUST. AMBASSADOR ASKED WHETHER CHAIRMAN HAD BEEN INFORMED ABOUT EXISTENCE OF LETTER; THE MINISTER'S REPLY; AND THE FORMAL REQUEST UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FOR A MEETING. BERHANE SAID HE WAS NOT INSTRUCTED ON THESE POINTS, BUT IT SEEMS HIGHLY LIKELY THAT FOREIGN MINISTER HAS NOT INFORMED CHAIRMAN.

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3. COMMENT: BERHANE HAD ON HIS DESK THE ORIGINAL COPY OF THE AMBASSADOR'S LETTER, SO IT HAS GONE EXACTLY NO WHERE. BERHANE AGREED TO REPORT AMBASSADOR'S POINTS TO FOREIGN MINISTER, BUT NOT SURE THIS WILL RESULT IN MEETING WITH CHAIRMAN. BELIEVE WE MUST NOW GO FORWARD WITH LETTER FROM PRESIDENT CARTER (ADDIS 3538) IF WE ARE TO MAKE PROGRESS THIS FISCAL YEAR. BELIEVE WE SHOULD NOT TAKE IRREVOCABLE DECISION TO COMMIT U.S. TO PROVIDE FUNDS FOR THREE ADDITIONAL AID PROJECTS, BUT ALLOW AMBASSADOR TO USE THIS IF THERE IS ANY SIGN OF FORWARD PROGRESS.
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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Drafter: n/a
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Executive Order: GS
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